

every solution, including clean, renewable hydropower, non-emitting nuclear power, clean coal technology, wind power, and domestic exploration and development.

It has been over 20 years since President Ronald Reagan called on Congress to lease ANWR. It has been over 30 years since a new refinery has come on line. Since then, America has paid the price for delay, and we are paying the price every time we pull up to the pump.

DEMOCRATIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS ON THE ECONOMY

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, for years, President Bush has prioritized the needs of the wealthiest few while taking us deep into debt and into an economic recession. In the meantime, most Americans have been forgotten. That is, until the Democrats took control of Congress last year.

We were the first to recognize that our economy was headed for a recession and pushed the President to join us in passing the economic stimulus package that provided assistance to middle-income Americans. While that was a good start, we know that more needs to be done to help those who are not prospering under this Bush economy. That is why we extended unemployment insurance for the growing number of Americans looking for work and why we tackled the housing foreclosure crisis, so that millions of Americans can keep their homes. We also support a second economic stimulus plan that invests in America, rather than in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, House Democrats are serious about working in a bipartisan fashion to turn this economy around, and the best way to do that is to prioritize the needs of hardworking, middle-class Americans.

INCREASING SUPPLY TO LOWER GAS PRICES

(Mr. SHIMKUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, it is really simple: If you want to help rural small town poor individuals in this country, we have to get the price of gas down. Here is the problem: January 2001, the price of a barrel of crude oil was \$23. When this majority came in, it was \$58. Now it is \$134. What does that translate into? From \$1.45 to \$2.23 to \$4.07. Add climate change, 50 cents additional. \$4.55, if you calculate climate change.

What is the solution? The solution is all of the above. Outer Continental Shelf exploration and recovery, coal-to-liquid technologies, solar and wind, renewable fuels. We need to do all the above, and you all need to help us.

We need to bring a bill to the floor that brings on more supply. We are willing to work with you. More supply is the only thing that we can do to bring down the cost of fuel which will help middle- and low-income Americans. We ask you to join us.

MISTAKES MADE IN AIR FORCE TANKER CONTRACT

(Mr. COURTNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, last week it was revealed that the Air Force made a serious mistake in comparing the costs of tanker aircraft proposals offered by Northrop Grumman/Airbus and Boeing.

When the Air Force awarded this \$40 billion contract to Northrop Grumman/Airbus, it repeatedly said that the cost of the two planes was one of their top selection criteria. However this latest revelation, supported by both companies, undercuts the Air Force's assertion that they picked the most cost-effective aircraft and casts doubt on whether the two planes were evaluated fairly on the other criteria.

Take, for example, fuel usage. The Airbus tanker uses 24 percent more fuel than Boeing, about 400 gallons more per hour, and over 2 billion gallons of fuel each year. Yet the Air Force continues to claim that the Airbus tanker is the best value over the long term.

At a time of soaring fuel costs that calls into question whether the most cost-effective choice was made for our taxpayers and our airmen for a plane with a lifespan of 40 years, the selection of tanker aircraft will have far-reaching implications for our Nation's industrial base and our security. The Air Force must get it right and rebid this critical decision.

DRILL NOTHING CONGRESS

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the Drill Nothing Congress is still determined to drive the price of gasoline up by not allowing offshore drilling for crude oil and natural gas.

Americans think we are held hostage by OPEC and dictator Chavez for our crude oil, but the real culprit is Congress. Congress holds the keys to freedom from OPEC and the little dictator, but will not unlock the big door to independence.

Congress should lift the offshore drilling ban in the Gulf coast, the east coast and even the sacred west coast. Then let each State and its people decide whether or not to drill off their shores.

Congress should let States receive a portion of the oil lease revenues oil companies pay Uncle Sam for the privilege to drill and States to use this additional revenue to fund education or whatever they wish.

The Drill Nothing Congress seems to want gasoline prices to continue to rise to punish Americans for driving gasoline-powered vehicles. Congress is the problem. In the court of American public opinion, Congress is wrong for its hardheaded, absurd policy of don't drill in America. Meanwhile, gasoline continues to rise in price.

And that's just the way it is.

DEMOCRATS TAKE ACTION ON RECORD HIGH GAS PRICES

(Mr. SIRES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, record high gas prices are forcing most American families to make some tough decisions this summer. While prices remain around \$4 a gallon, some families have to decide if they should take that planned summer vacation or not, while others are trying to determine what normal everyday drives can be eliminated because they simply cannot afford it.

This Democratic Congress recognizes the financial hardship these record prices are creating for everyone. That is why we have passed seven bills in the last couple of months to help lower prices.

We passed legislation in a strong, bipartisan fashion suspending sending more oil to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve until the end of the year, which will result in a 25 cents a gallon price reduction in July. We also passed legislation holding OPEC and big oil accountable for price fixing and cracking down on oil companies engaged in market manipulation.

Mr. Speaker, as Americans face continued pain at the pump, we should work in a strong bipartisan fashion to pass commonsense legislation that provides some immediate relief.

LISTENING TO CONSTITUENTS ON ENERGY PRICE INCREASES

(Mr. LATTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, as Congress continues its debate on domestic energy policy, we must be aware of what our constituents are saying, both at home and at work.

During this past week, I had the pleasure of touring two manufacturing plants in my district. These plants provide hundreds of good-paying jobs and produce high-quality products for our Nation's economy. During my tours, the management of these companies said that hands down, rising energy costs are their number one concern.

As energy costs rise, production costs rise as well at these plants. As production costs rise, companies all over the United States face competition from foreign manufacturers who have lower labor costs and, in some instances, lower fuel costs. Countries like China and India, who are currently exploring